



*In September, Senator Roraback accepted an award at the Big E from Dean Nancy Bull of the UCONN College of Agriculture for his legislative leadership in preserving Connecticut Farmland.*

## Landmark Legislation Will Protect Open Spaces, Preserve Historic Buildings and Enhance Quality of Life

Recognizing that our state must act now to preserve what remains of Connecticut's vanishing farmland and open space, the General Assembly this year passed legislation that for the first time will provide a dependable and substantial funding stream for several important purposes. Specifically, Public Act 05-228 is projected to supply more than \$24 million annually to be divided equally among four critical programs. These programs are:

- 1) Farmland preservation
- 2) Historic preservation
- 3) Open space matching grants so that the state can be a partner with local towns and land trusts in protecting unspoiled properties
- 4) Affordable housing

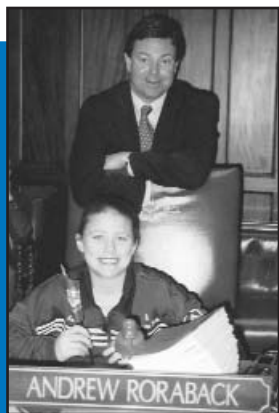
While much more remains to be done to invest in saving our landscape, this bill is a significant step in the right direction.



## After 11 Years, Perfect Attendance Streak Continues

Since beginning his service in the General Assembly on January 4, 1995, Senator Roraback has cast 5,350 consecutive votes and has been present for every vote taken in his eleven legislative sessions. Senator Roraback, who served three terms in the House, and is now serving his fifth year in the Senate, is the only member of the General Assembly with this record.

\* Legislative rules have required Senator Roraback to abstain from five votes taken in the eleven years he has served.



*Senator Roraback welcomes one of many young visitors to the Senate Chamber*



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# State Senator Andrew Roraback

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## 2005 Legislative Report

# State Senator Andrew Roraback



Serving the people of:

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North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon,  
Torrington, Warren, Washington & Winchester



# State Senator Andrew Roraback



## What a Difference a Year Makes

Dear Friend,

The 2005 regular session of the General Assembly ended in June. This session, my fifth as your State Senator, was an unprecedented experience for me.

Since taking office on July 1, 2004, Governor Rell has lead our state out of some of its darkest moments and has worked to restore faith and confidence in Connecticut's government. The tone she has set at the top has enabled the General Assembly to focus on the myriad of complex challenges facing our state in a much healthier atmosphere than that which had permeated our work when the cloud of an impeachment inquiry loomed over the Capitol. Elected officials from both parties and at every level of government must always make it their number one priority to uphold the public trust which has been placed in us.

As your State Senator, I have worked hard to try to keep you informed about the work your state government is doing. This legislative report summarizes some of the major actions taken during this year's legislative session. I hope you will find it interesting and informative. I also hope you will consider signing up for my periodic e-mail newsletter which provides updates on my legislative activities in Hartford.

If you would like to sign up to receive this newsletter, please visit [www.senaterepublicans.ct.gov](http://www.senaterepublicans.ct.gov), click on my homepage and then click on "newsletter."

If you have questions about the legislation discussed in this report, or any other matter concerning state government, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you in Hartford.

Sincerely,

Andrew



## Statutory Change Will Allow Volunteer Ambulance Personnel to Dispense Aspirin and Use Glucometers

The Connecticut Department of Public Health recently ruled, to the surprise and chagrin of volunteer ambulance personnel

throughout Connecticut, that it was illegal for them to administer aspirin or use glucometers in the course of delivering emergency care to patients in need. This edict belied both common sense and long time routine practiced by our volunteer ambulance personnel and emergency room physicians. I was therefore pleased to work, with widespread support and assistance from the volunteer community and colleagues from both sides of the aisle, to pass a bill restoring the ability of our volunteers to utilize these potentially life saving measures at the direction of emergency room physicians. While I regret that legislation is needed to secure common sense patient safety protection, I am pleased that my colleagues responded favorably to those who work in the field every day and joined me in support of this important legislation. Patient care can only be improved when our volunteer first responders, at the direction of emergency room physicians, can utilize these potentially life saving medical tools.

## Teachers' Retirement Fund

Sadly, the legislature did not act this year on a resolution, which I co-sponsored, calling for a constitutional amendment that would require Connecticut to fund the Teachers' Retirement Fund (TRF) at 100% every year. Currently, we have a \$5.2 billion liability in the TRF from years of under-funding. There are some who say we cannot afford to fund the TRF fully because it would require the state to make substantially greater payments to the fund each year. As one of the most vocal advocates for full funding in the General Assembly, I say we cannot afford NOT to do this.

Unfortunately, the measure was never taken up this year for a vote and the legislature only made a contribution of 69.7% of our current year's obligation. Thus, we are left yet again with a system that depends solely on the discretion of the legislature as to how much we fund or under-fund the TRF.

## Focus on Mental Health



On June 27th, Salisbury resident Sue Spring, Chairman of the Northwest Regional Mental Health Board, was joined by the Executive Director of the Board, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, in honoring Andrew for his many years "as a dedicated legislative advocate on behalf of persons with mental illness."

## Progress on Route 7



In May 2005, outside New Milford High School, Governor Rell joins with Andrew, Representative Clark Chapin, New Milford Mayor Pat Murphy and DOT officials in breaking ground for Phase II of the Route 7 project in New Milford. Prompt construction of the Brookfield by-pass is now a top priority for Governor Rell, Andrew and Representative David Scribner

## New Law Will Enable Health Care Providers to Say "I'm Sorry"

Evidence shows that patients are much more likely to bring lawsuits against health care providers with whom they have not had the opportunity to establish a personal relationship. While it is common knowledge that results of medical procedures can never be certain, physicians and other health care providers have for years been counseled by insurance companies and their lawyers never to express disappointment when there is an unanticipated outcome which is experienced by a patient. This is because of the fear that such an apology might later be used in court against the health care provider as evidence that they had done something improper. I was pleased this year to be the primary sponsor of a bill which will now enable a health care provider to say "I'm Sorry" when an imperfect outcome occurs without fear that such a statement will later be used against them in court. By encouraging open and empathetic communication between health care providers and their patients, Connecticut can look forward to both a more humane health care delivery system and fewer malpractice lawsuits in the years to come.



## A Report on the State Budget

I could not support the \$31.2 billion biennial budget which was passed by the legislature in June. With spending increasing at 8.8% for one year, a pace far above the rate of inflation, and with the imposition of a new tax on nursing home residents which will siphon money from many of these facilities which are already struggling to make ends meet, I did not think this budget represented the best the legislature could do. As noted in a Hartford Courant editorial on June 12, 2005, "the spending appetite at the Capitol is voracious and out of sync with economic reality." I also voted against the bonding bill which authorized more than \$1.2 billion in additional state borrowing because I believe our fast growing indebtedness will unduly burden future generations.